Mr. Ann F. Vinton 12614.c
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THE

INQUISITOR;

OR,

Invisible Rambler.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. ROWSON, AUTHOR OF VICTORIA.

SECOND AMERICAN EDITION.

VOLUME I.

PHILADELPHIA:

Printed for MATHEW CAREY, Bookſeller, South Market Street, near Fourth.

—1794—

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

LADY COCKBURNE,

THE FOLLOWING *PAGES* ARE

MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

AS A SMALL MARK OF THE GRATITUDE WHICH

WILL EVER GLOW UNDIMINISHED

(while life remains)

IN THE BREAST OF

HER LADYSHIP'S

MUCH HONOURED,

OBLIGED HUMBLE SERVANT,

SUSAN ROWSON.

BRITISH
MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

I CAN'T for my life ſee the neceſſity of it, ſaid I; there are numbers of books publiſhed without prefaces.

But you do not conſider, ſaid my friend, that this book abſolutely requires a preface—it is the adventures of a gentleman who poſſeſſed a magic ring: and ſeemingly thoſe adventures are written by himſelf, but you give no account how they came into your hands?

Why they came into my hands through my brain, friend, ſaid I.—Theſe adventures are merely the children of Fancy. I muſt own that the beſt part of them originated in facts.

But why do you make your Inquiſitor a man? ſaid he.

For a very obvious reaſon, I replied. A man may be with propriety brought forward in many ſcenes, where it would be the height of improba-

bility to introduce a woman.—I might, to be ſure, continued I, have introduced the following pages by ſaying I had found them in a hackney-coach; or met with part of them by accident at a paſtry-cook's or cheeſe-monger's, and being intereſted by the narrative, I ſent back for the remainder; or they might have been left in a lodging by ſome eccentric old gentleman, who had lived there for many years; and thinking the world would be greatly obliged to me for ſuffering ſuch a valuable manuſcript to be printed, I was prevailed on by the earneſt entreaties of my friends, to commit it to the hands of the bookſeller.

I know, Sir, this is the uſual method of uſhering theſe kind of publications into the world—but, for my own part, I will honeſtly confeſs that this work was written ſolely for my amuſement. As to the motives that induced me to publiſh it, they can be of no conſequence for the reader to be informed of, therefore they ſhall remain a ſecret.

But ſure, ſaid my friend, you will make ſome apology for attempting to write in the ſtyle of the inimitable Sterne?

Is the perſon required to make an apology who copies a portrait painted by an eminent maſter, ſaid I; or ſhould he fail of retaining, in his copy, the fine ſtrokes, the beautiful and ſtriking expreſſion in the features of the faultleſs original; is he to tear his picture, or commit it to the flames, becauſe he has not the genius of the artiſt whoſe work he copied? Or, ſuppoſe a man admired his Sovereign's exalted virtues, and with a laudable ambition ſtrove to imitate them; is he, becauſe he is conſcious of not having the abilities to ſhine in the moſt eminent degree, not to endeavour to imitate them at all; or to hide from the world the progreſs he makes?

No, certainly, ſaid my friend; but have you the vanity to ſuppoſe that your writings are the leaſt tinctured with that ſpirit and fire, which are ſo conſpicuous in the works of your bright original?

By no means, ſaid I; but I think, as the ſtars ſhine brighteſt when neither the ſun nor moon are in the firmament, ſo, perhaps, when the works of Sterne are not at hand, the Inquiſitor may be read with ſome ſmall degree of attention, and afford the reader a little amuſement; but ſhould

Maria or Le Fevre make their appearance, its weak rays will be extinguiſhed by the tear of ſenſibility, which the love-lorn virgin and dying ſoldier would excite.

Then you do not intend to write a preface? ſaid my friend.

Upon my word, I replied, I have begun ſeveral, but I never could write one to pleaſe me; ſo I have at laſt determined to publiſh it without, and leave it to the readers to form what conjecture they pleaſed concerning how I came poſſeſſed of the papers which contained the adventures.

That will never do, ſaid he, ſhaking his head.

Then prithee, my good friend, ſaid I, do write a preface for me; for here I have been hammering my pericranium and biting my nails theſe two hours, without being able to beat out a ſingle ſentence, either introductory or prefatory.

Suppoſe, ſaid he, you preſent your readers with our converſation; it will be better than no preface at all.

It was a lucky thought, and I inſtantly ſet about it.

Gentle Reader, I here commit to your kind patronage this offspring of Fancy; my characters are not pointed at particular perſons, except one or two, where gratitude involuntarily guided my pen; it was then I delineated the characters of a Lady Allworth, and the family of the amiable ſiſters at H-m—rſ—th.

As to thoſe characters which appear in an unamiable light, I neither wiſh or mean for any perſon to ſay that this is meant for Mr. or Mrs. ſuch a one; but I would wiſh every perſon who may think the character was deſigned for themſelves, to remember that the likeneſs was accidentally taken, and it is conſcience only that makes it appear ſo ſtriking to their imagination.

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THE

INQUISITOR, &c.

THE PETITION.

I SHOULD like to know the certainty of it, ſaid I, putting the petition into my pocket.—It contained an account of an unfortunate tradeſman reduced to want, with a wife and three ſmall children.—He aſked not charity for himſelf, but them.—I ſhould like to know the certainty of it, ſaid I—there are ſo many feigned tales of diſtreſs, and the world is ſo full of duplicity, that in following the dictates of humanity, we often encourage idleneſs—Could I but be ſatisfied of the authenticity of this man's ſtory, I would do ſomething for him.

Will your honour pleaſe to ſend an anſwer?—ſaid the child, that brought the petition.

I had forgot her—by the unaffected innocence of her countenance, ſhe could ſcarcely have ſeen nine years.—Meekneſs ſmiled in her ſweet eyes—what a lovely flower, ſaid I—'tis a pity the chilling breath of ſorrow ſhould viſit thee too rudely——I gave her half a guinea, and bid her tell her father to come to me the next morning.

THE WISH.

How happy ſhould I be, if ſome good fairy, as in days of yore, would give me the power of viſiting, unſeen, the receptacles of the miſerable, and the habitations of vice and luxury.—What a ſatisfaction I ſhould feel in rewarding and ſupporting merit; or withdrawing the veil, and diſcovering the hideous aſpect of hypocriſy. Beſides, ſays ſelf-love, I ſhould then have an opportunity of diſcovering the ſentiments of the world concerning myſelf. I ſhould find my real friends, and detect my enemies.—If half my fortune could procure ſuch a power, I would freely give it.

Search your heart, replies a ſoft voice, and ſee if it is not an unwarrantable curioſity, rather than a real wiſh to do good, that now inſpires you.

It is ſtrange, ſaid I; I hear a voice, but ſee no perſon near me; ſurely I do not dream!

Be not ſurpriſed, continued my inviſible companion, I am your guardian genius, and have it in my power to comply with your wiſhes, provided they are corrected by reaſon.—Look on that table, and you will ſee a ring, which, when on your finger, will render you inviſible; and, as long as humanity, honor, or friendſhip, leads you to uſe it, it will contribute to your happineſs; but whenever you endeavour to make it ſubſervient to any unworthy purpoſe, it will lead you into innumerable difficulties.

I thanked the kind genius, inſtantly ſeized the treaſure, put it on my finger, and, eager to try the experiment, walked out.

THE STREET.

I'LL bet you ten to one, ſaid a noted gambler to another;—they were walking arm in arm—I'll bet you ten to one I am married before this day fortnight.—You are a lucky dog, Cogdie, replied his companion, to obtain ſo lovely a woman as Meliſſa, and twenty thouſand pounds into the bargain.

D—n the woman, ſaid the wretch, it is money I want: by Heavens I have not five guineas left in the world, and am twice as many hundred in debt. If I do not ſucceed in this matrimonial ſcheme, I ſhall go to limbo.—There's an old prying cat of a maiden aunt ſtands deviliſhly in the way, or I could eaſily dupe the old dad.—As to Meliſſa herſelf, ſhe's ſuch a mere ſimpleton in the ways of the world, that it requires but a ſmall ſhare of art to make her believe almoſt any thing.

By this time they had reached the houſe of the intended victim, when finding my ring had the deſired effect, I entered the houſe with her betrayer. His companion wiſhed him good morning, and I, without heſitation, followed him up ſtairs.

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

A VENERABLE old man was ſitting on a ſopha; the hoary ornaments of his head inſpired the mind

with awe, while the benignity of his countenance encouraged and invited friendſhip.—Beſide him, reading Thomſon's Seaſons, ſat his daughter, lovely and blooming as Aurora, when with roſy fingers, on a ſweet May morn, ſhe unbars the gates of light. —As Cogdie approached, her features were enlivened with a glow that plainly told me her heart was not her own; and the cordiality with which her father received him, evinced the integrity of his own heart, as he ſuſpected not the integrity of another. After the uſual compliments, the little party being ſeated, Cogdie informed the old gentleman that he had been prevented the honor of dining with him that day by a tradeſman, to whom he owed about thirty pounds, which, as he had not lately received remittances from his father, he found it inconvenient juſt then to pay; that the man would take no denial, but had threatened to arreſt him. I muſt be obliged to borrow this paltry ſum, continued he, till I can write again to my father.—You ſhall not be diſtreſſed for ſuch a trifle, ſaid the old gentleman, I will lend it you.

He left the room to get the money, when the unfeeling Cogdie made uſe of that opportunity to perſuade the heedleſs unſuſpecting Meliſſa to elope.

Thou art worſe than a midnight ruffian, ſaid I—thou art ſtealing the peace of a man who is at this moment contributing to thine. They had juſt time to appoint the day, hour, and place of rendezvous, when Meliſſa's father returned with the money.—I had heard enough, and quitted the room as the old gentleman entered.

THE REFLECTION.

THAT a man who has a wife and numerous family of children, and sees them plunged in the deepest distress, should rob to keep them from starving, is not a matter of surprise—and while stern Justice holds the balance, angel-like pity gently turns the scale. But that a man in full health and vigour, with strength and abilities to support himself, who has no weeping wife or famished children to urge him to the deed, should cozen and defraud his best friend, debauch the morals of an innocent girl, and plunge her into ruin, only to obtain a larger share of sordid ore, is to me unaccountable. It is an act that makes humanity shrink back aghast: Justice, with frowns, unsheaths her sword, and pity weeps but for the offender's crimes.

I will rescue Melissa, said I—she may hereafter thank me. The thought filled my mind with unusual complacency.—I enjoyed in idea the satisfaction and gratitude of her father, when he beheld his darling rescued from the jaws of destruction.

It was a fine evening in the month of June; so removing the ring from my finger, I stepped into a fruiterer's, purchased a bottle of strawberries, walked into the Park, and seated myself in one of the chairs.—My mind was at that moment a sort of vacuum, my thoughts unemployed, when casting my eyes upon the paper that covered the strawberries, I perceived it was part of a fairy tale, but wrote in an uncommon poetic style.

THE FRAGMENT.

FAIR Cynthia now, bright Empreſs of the night,
Mounted her azure throne, with diamonds ſtudded;
Her modeſt face, veil'd in a fleecy cloud,
Which, as it partly hid, heighten'd her beauties.
When fair Alzada, weary and forlorn,
Penſive ſat down beſide a murm'ring ſtream,
With nought to ſhield her from nocturnal dews,
Saving an ancient oak, whoſe ſturdy boughs
Had brav'd the ſtorms of many a winter paſt.
Her lovely head reclin'd upon her hand;
Her eyes were rais'd with fervour toward Heav'n.
In thoſe bright orbs ſtarted a pearly drop,
Which, as it fell, another took its place,
And that, too, fell and kiſs'd its pleaſing way
In quick ſucceſſion down her ruby cheeks.
"Ah! me," ſhe cried, "how wretched is my fate,
"Forc'd from my royal parents, and my home;
"What hoſpitable roof will now receive me,
"Or where ſhall poor Alzada lay her head.
"In this lone wild I ſee no trace of mortals;
"No lowing herds beſpeaks a manſion near:
"No bleating flock breaks this moſt ſolemn ſilence;
"And ere another heavy hour is paſt,
"Perhaps ſome ſavage monſter, fierce for prey,
"On me may ſatisfy his craving hunger."
The genius Abradan heheld her ſorrows;
In a plain ruſtic form conceal'd his own,
And thus addreſs'd the ſadly weeping fair:
"Fair daughter of affliction, follow me;
"I come to lead you to a feſtive board,

" Where ſocial mirth and innocence preſide,
" And where the ſmiling hoſt ſhall bid you welcome."
The trembling princeſs left her moſſy ſeat,
And without ſpeaking, followed her kind guide.
When ſudden clouds obſcur'd the face of Heav'n;
The thunders roll'd, the forked lightnings flaſh'd,
And all around was horror and amazement;
Alzada ſunk in terror to the ground.
A death-like ſwoon ſeal'd up each active ſenſe.
The tempeſt ceas'd. She rais'd her fearful eyes,
And ſaw before her a fair lofty palace:
The gates were ſolid braſs; and the ſupporters
Marble, twin'd round with vine leaves wrought in gold.
She enter'd, and was inſtantly ſurrounded
By ſeven young virgins, clad in azure blue,
With alabaſter vaſes in their hands,
Who paid the homage to a princeſs due.
They ſhed around her numberleſs perfumes,
And o'er her threw a robe, of ſpotleſs white,
Then led her to a room within the palace,
Where, on a throne of amethyſt and gold,
There ſat a monarch of majeſtic port;
Who, riſing, welcom'd the admiring princeſs,
And plac'd her on a ſhining throne beſide him.
They brought her baſkets of the choiceſt fruits,
And water from the pureſt limpid ſtream.
Alzada, being refreſh'd, roſe from her ſeat,
And thus addreſs'd the maſter of the feaſt:
" Whoe'er thou art, great king, whoſe magic pow'r
" Has brought me to this place, where fartheſt Ind'
" Seems to have empti'd her exhauſtleſs ſtore
" To add to its magnificence:

" Say, can you guide a helpleſs wand'ring maid,
" To find the home where late ſhe was ſo bleſt;
" From whence the ſorcereſs Zeluba forc'd her,
" And left her parents to bewail her loſs."
To which the monarch, with a ſmile, reply'd,
" Lovely Alzada, faireſt of thy ſex,
" Whoſe charms triumphant rule this royal heart,
" Dry up thy tears. By this right hand I ſwear,
" Ere Phœbus harneſſes his fiery ſteeds,
" And leaves his ſea-green couch to viſit mortals,
" I will conduct you to your father's court,
" And guard you from the vile Zelubia's pow'r.
" Slaves bring my chariot. Bid the virgins wait,
" And ſtrew freſh flow'rs where'er Alzada treads."
The chariot was of curious workmanſhip,
Ivory, gold, coral, and precious ſtones;
Around it hover'd little laughing loves;
And on each ſide were rang'd fair village maids,
With lutes and harps, tabors and ſhepherds' pipes,
Singing and playing ſoft harmonious airs.
Eight milk-white ſteeds,

I turned the paper, but there was no more—— There are times when the mind is affected by mere trifles; ſuch now was my caſe—I was vexed at not finding the concluſion of the ſtory, and determined to go back to the fruiterer's, and inquire if they had the remainder.—A few moments brought me to the place.

THE FRUITERER'S.

A CROWD was aſſembled before the door. Forgetting what I came for, friend, ſaid I—addreſſing

myſelf to the maſter of the ſhop, can you tell me the cauſe of this buſtle?—It is a very extraordinary one, Sir, he replied.—A boy about ten years old, going to a ſhop hard by to purchaſe ſomething for his mother, was recollected by a tradeſman to whom his father owed a conſiderable ſum of money, and who had juſt before employed a bailiff to arreſt him.—— The man inquired of the child where his father lived, and upon his refuſing to tell, offered him money, and promiſed him a great many fine things; but finding that plan equally ineffectual, he proceeded to threats. Upon which, the boy burſt into tears, and ſeating himſelf upon ſome ſteps oppoſite, declared he would ſtay there all night, rather than give them an opportunity of ſending his father to jail.

The boy has the ſpirit of a Roman, ſaid I.—How many a man will feel the bluſh of conſcious guilt upon his cheek, when he ſhall be told of this; for, Oh! ſhame to humanity and manhood, how many would ſell their country through avarice, or betray it through fear.—While this magnanimous boy refuſes a bribe, though poverty might induce him to take it, and dares brave the threats of an inhuman wretch, rather than betray his father, though his childhood might excuſe even cowardice.—I will go and ſpeak to the creditor, ſaid I—perhaps I may perſuade him to drop his deſign of arreſting the poor man, and then I will follow the boy home.

THE CREDITOR.

PRAY, Sir, how much does this boy's father owe you?

Eighteen pounds, replied the man.

And are you really diſtreſſed for the money?

No; thank my prudence for that; I have taken care of the main chance, and not like Heartfree, loved others more than myſelf.

I fear you have not loved them ſo well, my friend.

Why no, to be ſure! I follow the firſt law of nature, ſelf-preſervation.

And why not follow the firſt rule of Chriſtianity, to do as you would be done by?

Why look ye, Sir; I always pay my debts punctually, and I expect others ſhould pay me as punctually.

Certainly.—But ſuppoſe a man who has an honeſt heart, ſhould, by unavoidable misfortunes, be rendered unable to diſcharge his debts; is it not better to truſt to his honor, rather than by confining him, put it entirely out of his power to pay you at all?

Truſt to his honor—eh! you know but little of this world, to talk at that rate: why this very Heartfree was ruined by truſting to a perſon's honor. An old officer lodged in his houſe for many years, borrowed money of him, run in his debt for linen for his whole family, and when I have talked to Heartfree about the impropriety of his conduct in not aſking for payment, he would anſwer—I am ſure he will pay me whenever he has it in his power—but before it was in his power, he died, leaving four children without the leaſt ſupport. The eldeſt was

about twenty; a fine young girl to be ſure, but ſhe had been brought up in idleneſs. She could embroider, draw, dance, ſing, and play upon the ſpinnet; but that would not keep her; ſo I adviſed Heartfree to try and get her a place to wait on a lady. To put the two young girls out apprentice, and take the boy to go of errands, clean ſhoes, knives, &c. in his own kitchen; but he, forſooth, ſaid no; the children of a man who had ſpent his days in the ſervice of his country, ſhould never want an aſylum while he had a houſe; nor the innocent orphans want a friend, while he lived: ſo he married the eldeſt, and put her ſiſters to ſchool, where, luckily, they both died.—The boy he ſent to the Eaſt-Indies about ſeven years ago, after ſpending an enormous ſum on his education.—His wife bred very faſt, and was quite the fine lady; ſo what with extravagance, and a few loſſes, from being one of the firſt linen-drapers in the city, he has become a bankrupt, and, as I ſuppoſe, has not bread to eat.

And for his humanity, ſaid I—you would reward him with a priſon; rob his wife and children of their only comfort, the preſence of their father and their friend—and of what uſe will it be to you?

I don't know that it will be of much uſe to *me*, he replied; but it will teach Heartfree to remember himſelf before others, another time.

The remembrance of what he has done for others, ſaid I, ſo far from ſitting painful on his mind, will ſmooth the thorny pillow of diſtreſs, and make even a priſon pleaſant; he ſhall ſleep ſoundly on a bed of ſtraw, and dream of thoſe whoſe ſorrows he has lightened, while you ſhall feel ſcorpions on a bed of

down: nor ſhall the ſweet reſtorer of tired nature viſit you, unleſs it be to fright you with ſome dreadful viſion of priſons and ſtarving wretches.

I turned from him with honeſt indignation, and calling to the fruiterer, gave him the money to diſcharge the debt.—I would not truſt myſelf to ſpeak to the man again, who could ſo ſhamefully trample on the laws of humanity.—The poor boy was weeping, his face hid with his hands. Go home, child, ſaid I—your father's debt is paid. He ſtaid not to thank me; but the pleaſure that ſparkled in his eye, the agility with which he ſprang from his ſeat, and flew towards his home, conveyed a greater pleaſure to my heart, than the moſt eloquent effuſions of gratitude.—I was willing to be a witneſs of his relating the ſtory to his parents; ſo putting on my ring, I followed him unſeen.

THE FAMILY.

As I aſcended a narrow winding ſtair-caſe, I perceived in a ſmall room, the door of which was partly open, an elegantly-formed woman, ſitting on the ſide of a wretched bed, on which lay a man, the picture of famine. On her knee ſat a lovely infant, who with her little hand was wiping off the tears that trickled down her mother's cheeks.—The little boy, breathleſs with impatience, ruſhed into the room—Papa—Mamma—'tis paid—you ſhall not go to priſon—I would not tell where you lived; indeed he was very angry; but that good gentleman—

My dear boy, cried the fond mother, why do you talk ſo incoherently? Who has frightened my child? What is the matter with you?

He endeavoured to tell his ſtory with propriety.—It was in vain, joy had entirely unconnected his ideas; but he made himſelf underſtood.

Oh! thou ſenſualiſt, couldſt thou but in imagination taſte the luxury of my feelings at this moment, thou wouldſt henceforth forego the gratification of thy groſſer appetites, to feaſt thy mind with the higheſt of human pleaſures.

I ſaw the honeſt fruiterer enter with ſome ſupplies which I had judged might be neceſſary for people in their condition. He repeated every circumſtance, only concealing my name.

I was preparing to leave the room, when a child entered, whom I inſtantly knew to be my little petitioner—I will ſee thee again to-morrow, ſaid I—but will now ſeek my lovely Emma, and engage her in thy behalf.

THE RESOLUTION.

IT was more than I could conveniently afford, ſaid I—when I found how much money I had expended. Twenty pounds is a good ſum, but it will coſt me much more before I have placed Heartfree in a ſituation more ſuitable to his merit—but no matter, I will diſcharge one of my ſervants: why ſhould I keep two footmen, when a man of greater worth is in want of even the common neceſſaries of life?—

my dear Emma will, I am ſure, agree to this propoſal.—My phæton and horſes, too, I will diſpoſe of; one carriage is enough; what buſineſs have I with ſuperfluities? the money this requires will be much better employed in relieving the unfortunate. I will be generous, but I will not be imprudent—my Emma, and her dear little Harriet, ſhall not ſuffer for my benevolence.

I had reached my own manſion; a ſmile of chearfulneſs, that ever graced my Emma's face, bade me welcome.

I communicated my propoſal, and related Heartfree's caſe.—She ſmiled aſſent, and the ſmile was rendered doubly enchanting, accompanied by the tear of ſenſibility.

Retiring, I paſſed through my Harriet's chamber—ſweet are the ſlumbers of the innocent. I feaſted my eyes upon her infant beauties, and retired to reſt with a mind ſo ſerene, that I envied not the greateſt monarch, and forgave even my bittereſt enemies.

THE MORNING RAMBLE.

WHO will pretend to ſay that early riſing does not afford us many pleaſures, and contribute to our health?—how charming to ſee the beauteous orb of day, riſing ſupremely bright, to enliven nature, and tinge with gold the lofty mountains' tops.—The country is the place to enjoy theſe beauties; but even near London we may find pleaſant walks.—I had aſcended a hill—how charming was the proſpect—

fields crowned with riſing plenty; the peaſants blithly ſinging as they labour.—Theſe people ſeem happy, but they are not to be envied; they work hard for their bread, and if their rude, unpoliſhed minds are callous and unfeeling in diſtreſs, they are likewiſe inſenſible to many of the pleaſures that await them; the works of nature afford them no ſatisfaction, becauſe they cannot contemplate their beauties; yet their minds are ſuited to their ſtation; refinement would be no bleſſing to them, and the beſt ſecurity the peaſant has for happineſs, is ignorance.

Theſe were my reflections, as I rambled towards Hampſtead.

Give me a draught of milk, my dear, ſaid I, to a roſy damſel.—She bluſhed, curtſied aukwardly, and complied—ſhe trembled as ſhe preſented it.

Were you ever in love? ſaid I, as I took the milk.

Never but once, and pleaſe your honor.

And are you not in love now?

No.

No! and how happens that?

I am going to be married to-morrow.

And you don't think love neceſſary in matrimony?

Father ſays I ſhall love my huſband as ſoon as I am married.

And pray who was you in love with?

Colin; his cottage was cloſe to ours; we were born on the ſame day, and when we were children we uſed to play together. If Colin had ſome fruit he would ſave a part for me; and when ſtrange gentlemen or ladies gave him half-pence, he ſhared them

with me: when we grew older, he would tend my ſheep, watch my young lambs, and bring home my cows; and if I'd had a brother, your honor, he could not have been kinder, nor, I am ſure, I could not have loved him better; ſo he axed father to let us be married; but Colin was but a ſhepherd's boy, and I was father's only child, ſo he ſaid he could give me fifty pounds, and I might have a match better than Colin—ſo we kiſſed and parted—and to-morrow I am to be married to farmer Willſon, who is old and lame, but he ſays I ſhall have a mort of fine things—tho', to tell the truth, I had rather wear my own linſey jacket, and be married to Colin.

And ſo you ſhall, my ſweet ſimple ruſtic, ſaid I—Her father was one of my tenants—I took out my pocket-book, wrote a line or two on my tablet, and bade her give it to her father.

What a curſe this pride is, ſaid I, as I directed my ſteps towards London—but that this haughty dame ſhould ſtoop to inhabit a cottage, is wondrous ſtrange—Why a peer of the realm could but have made his daughter miſerable, to preſerve the dignity of his houſe, but in the name of common ſenſe, what has a peaſant to do with pride of family?

THE INN YARD.

My dear friend, you are heartily welcome to town, ſaid a ſpruce-dreſſed citizen, as he helped his country friend to alight from the Norfolk ſtage. Pray come home with me; I expect you will make me

houſe your own while you ſtay in town; there is nothing in my power I will not do to make it agreeable to you. I have depended upon your company; my whole houſe is at your ſervice.

This over-acted complaiſance made me ſuſpect his ſincerity, or that he had ſome ſiniſter point in view; ſo putting my ring on my finger, I followed them home.

THE DISCOVERY.

I AM greatly obliged to you, ſaid the country gentleman, as he ſat down to the breakfaſt table; the invitation you have given me is very acceptable; I have loſt the eſtate I have been ſo long at law about, for want of ſufficient evidence; and after I have paid the coſts, I ſhall not have more than two hundred pounds left, with which I mean to purchaſe an annuity; therefore I ſhall make your houſe my home, till I can ſettle my affairs.

It may be ſome time before you can ſettle your buſineſs to your ſatisfaction, replied the citizen, his features contracting into cold civility; and I expect a gentleman to take my firſt floor in about a week; I am very ſorry I cannot accommodate you longer.

My dear Mr. Woollet, cried the wife, haſtily entering, I am vaſtly glad to ſee you.

Mr. Woollet has loſt his lawſuit, my dear, ſaid the huſband.

The ſmile of welcome was inſtantly changed into a look of amazement—She had advanced to give him

her hand, but on his attempting to ſalute her, ſhe withdrew her cheek, exclaiming I am ſorry for his diſappointment—and began to make the tea.

He drank two diſhes of tea, and then aſked his friend to lend him two guineas.—He had it not in the houſe.—Trade was very precarious—again mentioned his expected lodger, and recommended a mean room to his friend, at half a crown per week, in an obſcure lane in the city.

Oh! ſelf-intereſt, how doſt thou deaden every virtue; lead to hypocriſy and vice, and make us what we ſhould be aſhamed to own, mean, avaricious, and unfeeling.—Would I change the feeling heart for all the intereſted views this world affords? Oh, no! give me ſenſibility to feel another's woe, and I ſhall then feel, as I ought, my own happineſs.

THE SURPRISE.

It is vexatious, ſaid Mr. Woollet, as he aroſe from breakfaſt, that I cannot ſtay here, as I have no ready money to procure a lodging.—No anſwer was made.

Can't I have a room on your ſecond floor, Mrs. Saveall?

Really, Sir, they are all occupied.

I do not know what to do; I muſt beg you to lend me half a guinea till next week.

I cannot, upon my word, Sir.

Mr. Woollet ſummoned up a look of expreſſive anger and contempt, and fixing his eyes on his falſe friend, cried, He who can refuſe half a guinea to

my neceſſities, ſhall never ſhare my proſperity.—Know, ſelfiſh man, I have gained my cauſe, and am, at this moment, maſter of two thouſand pounds per annum. Then turning from them, haſtily left the houſe.

I ſtood for a moment to view their confuſion; they ſpoke not a word, but giving each other the keeneſt looks of reproach, ſeparated in ſullen ſilence.

At that inſtant, Heartfree ſhot acroſs my mind, I quitted the houſe, and removing the ring from my finger, walked home.

THE BREAKFAST.

SHE was liſtening with attention to Heartfree, who was relating the ſtory of laſt night. She knew it before, but ſtill it was pleaſing, for it was in praiſe of the man ſhe loved.—Harriet had made an acquaintance with my little petitioner; was diſplaying her toys, and teaching her to dreſs her doll.

I have made you wait, my Emma, ſaid I—Heartfree roſe from his ſeat, bowed, and caſt down his eyes, while his cheeks were dyed with crimſon—it was a bluſh neither expreſſive of guilt nor ſhame—it was a bluſh occaſioned only by the pain a noble heart feels when in a ſtate of deſpondence. I took no notice of it, but began a converſation on indifferent ſubjects—his confuſion gradually decreaſed, and in leſs than half an hour was quite diſſipated.

I ſettled a plan for his future ſubſiſtence—he left me in haſte to carry the joyful tidings to his wife—he was beyond expreſſion happy, nor was I a jot behind him in that particular.—My Harriet could not part with her little play-fellow.—She ſhall live with you, Harriet, ſaid I;—ſo ſhe ſhall, papa, and ride in my coach, and wear my fine things—won't you, Lucy?

She looked up at me with a countenance I ſhall never forget.

And ſhall I never ſee mamma, then? and muſt *ſhe* ſtill live in that dark room?

I was willing to try her.—You ſhall ſtay here, Lucy, ſaid I, but you muſt not ſee your mamma, nor can I help her living in that little dark room.

She ſurveyed the apartment ſhe was in, as though making a compariſon.

It is a fine place, ſaid ſhe; but if my mamma cannot take a part of theſe fine things, I had rather go home again.

Oh! exclaimed Emma, who can ſay that Heartfree is poor; fate has indeed robbed him of his wealth, but heaven in return has given him an invaluable treaſure in his children.

THE LESSON.

IT was about two years after, when my Emma, Harriet, Lucy, and myſelf, were on a viſit to Heartfree.—His brother had returned from India with a fortune equal to their moſt ſanguine wiſhes.—In rural retirement, about twenty miles from London,

they lived in complete happineſs, having been taught the value of preſent bleſſings, by paſt ſcenes of ſorrow.

It was a night when the contending elements ſeemed to threaten the earth with diſſolution; the forked lightening rived the ſturdy oaks; the burſting and almoſt inceſſant peals of thunder made all nature tremble. The whirlwind raged, the gleaming meteors ſhewed the diſtant foaming ſea, its proud unſettled waves that ſeemed to wage war with the black impending ſky.—It was a night of horror. It was a night to make a man remember on what a ſlender thread his life depends. The vaſt univerſe is but an atom that with one blaſt from the Creative Power might vaniſh into air, and leave no trace of planets, earth, or ſea, but all again be univerſal chaos.

It ceaſed. The moon broke from behind a jetty cloud, tinged round with ſilver—the wind paſſed gently over the trees and herbage, whoſe leaves had caught the late deſcending ſhower, and glittered in the moon beams.

The tempeſt was dreadful, ſaid I, but it has cleared the air of all noxious vapours; and how beautiful appears the face of nature, heightened by the remembrance of the late ſcene of horror!—Juſt ſo it is with life; none can enjoy the pleaſures of proſperity ſo well as thoſe who have felt the pangs of adverſity.

Our ears were invaded by a groan; it came from the road; we followed the ſound, and found a man lying on the ground, bleeding, and almoſt naked.—

We bore him to the houſe, his wounds were dreſſed, and it was judged reſt would be his beſt reſtorer.

In the morning he was unable to riſe. I propoſed to Heartfree to viſit him; we entered the room, put back the curtains, and diſcovered the features of the inhuman Creditor.—We pauſed.—He endeavoured to turn his face from us, and waving his hand for us to leave him, cried emphatically, Heartfree! thou art revenged.

I ſhould like to know, ſaid Heartfree, when his wounded gueſt was able to leave his apartment, by what accident you came in that dangerous ſituation.

I will inform you, he replied:——About three weeks ſince, my houſe was conſumed by fire, and with it all my property—my wife and children were ſaved, but they were ſaved from the flames to periſh by famine.

His heart was full.—Heartfree paſſed his hand acroſs his eyes.—The man continued,—Some charitable people made a collection of near fifty pounds, and adviſed me to go into the country, and purchaſe a little place, where my wife and children might be ſupported by induſtry.—To ſave expences I travelled on foot, and in a late tempeſt ſtopt at an ale houſe till it ſhould be over. On coming away, two men offered to accompany me; but before I had proceeded far, they ſtopped and demanded my money; ſeeing they had no fire-arms, I endeavoured to defend myſelf, but they were too powerful; I received a wound in my ſide, and ſoon grew inſenſible; the reſt you know.—I return you many thanks

for the unmerited favours I have received; but I muſt now go back to my poor family, and either ſtarve in obſcurity, or go to the pariſh.

You ſhall do neither, exclaimed Heartfree, looking at his own children as he ſpoke.

Heartfree was a huſband and a father in the juſt ſenſe of the words.—He was troubled with a ſhort memory, and had entirely forgot that he had ever been harſhly treated by the perſon before him.

You ſhall do neither, ſaid he, taking out his pocket book, and endeavouring to diſperſe the drops of humanity that ſtarted in his eye: here, giving him a note, here is a trifle; I do not at preſent want; when you can ſpare it, repay me; till then you are welcome.

The man could not take it—aſtoniſhment had rendered him motionleſs.

Heartfree put it on the table, and calling to a ſervant to get a horſe ready for his gueſt to return to town, wiſhed him a pleaſant ride, and left the room.

THE ELOPEMENT.

I FEAR this ſtep will greatly diſtreſs my poor father, ſaid Meliſſa to her woman, as they entered the Park.

They had left the carriage at Spring Gardens, with orders if they did not return in two hours, to go home.

Mrs. Tiffany was artful; ſhe knew her lady's partiality for Cogdie, and ſhe painted the matrimonial ſtate, founded on love, in the moſt glowing colours.

Meliſſa for a moment forgot her father, but the idea ſoon returned.

I hope he will not be very wretched, ſaid ſhe.

You will ſoon return, anſwered Mrs. Tiffany.

But I marry without conſulting him.

And is not your fortune your own, Madam; and in a caſe of this nature, young ladies can certainly tell what will contribute to their own happineſs, better than their old fathers can judge for them.

But he will be very angry, Tiffany—I will not go—I will return, fall at his feet, and confeſs my error—I am ſure he will refuſe me nothing that is really neceſſary to my happineſs.

Dear madam, how can you talk ſo—what will poor Mr. Cogdie think? he will certainly go diſtracted.

Meliſſa ſtopped.

And then your aunt Sarah, ſhe will never let you have Mr. Cogdie, if ſhe can prevent it.

No matter; I will not go.

Well, Madam, juſt as you pleaſe; Mr. Cogdie will think you meant to make a fool of him, and will marry Miſs Sparkle, who is ſo fond of him.

Meliſſa ſighed—and went forward.

A chaiſe and four was waiting for her at Hyde-Park corner; I had a horſe there ready alſo.—By means of my ring I had followed them through the

Park unſeen—I now took it off, and mounting my horſe, followed the chaiſe full ſpeed, in which were Cogdie, Meliſſa, and her woman.

GRETNA GREEN.

I HAVE often heard of this place, ſaid I, but I never thought I ſhould be one that took a trip to it on an hymeneal expedition;—but I muſt not loſe ſight of Meliſſa; ſo putting on my ring, I followed them into the houſe.

THE INN.

How happy your condeſcenſion makes me, ſaid Cogdie, as he ſeated himſelf by Meliſſa—but I ſhall not be entirely devoid of fear till I can call you mine: and as the parſon is not in the way, ſuppoſe, my dear girl, you ſign this paper, to certify that you came with me voluntarily, in caſe I ſhould be called to an account for running away with an Heireſs.

May I not read the paper, ſaid Meliſſa.

It is of no great conſequence, my love, whether you ſign it or not, only in ſuch caſes there are ſometimes difficulties enſue after the ceremony is over. I may be tried and caſt.

Give me the paper, I will ſign it.

I trembled with anxiety.—She had taken up the pen to ſign the conveyance of her whole fortune into his hands.

I will ſee him—exclaimed a voice, not the gentleſt in the world—I have a warrant to apprehend him.

Cogdie turned pale as aſhes.—The pen dropped from Meliſſa's hand.—

An officer of juſtice entered.

Mr. Cogdie, ſaid he, you muſt go with me. I arreſt you for a fraud committed five years ago.

And who has employed you? who forged this tale to injure me in the opinion of this lady?

I had taken off my ring, and ſtepping forward at that moment, cried, 'tis I, you villain. Is it not enough that you have ruined an innocent girl who was under my protection; left her and her helpleſs infant to ſhame and want, and by baſe and fraudulent methods taken from me near a thouſand pounds, but you muſt add to the catalogue of your crimes the ruin of this amiable lady, and break the heart of her worthy father.

Meliſſa ſhrieked, and fainted; I caught her as ſhe fell, and bore her in my arms to another apartment.—Cogdie departed with the officers of juſtice, muttering curſes as he went.

O! where am I, cried Meliſſa, as ſhe opened her eyes, and where is my dear father? Safe, I hope, replied I; and when you chooſe, I will order a chaiſe, and we will return to him.

When you pleaſe, Sir; but I fear he will never ſee me, never forgive me; I dare not go to him.

I will make your peace with him, ſaid I.—Meliſſa burſt into tears, and was ſilent.

We cannot depart without ſome refreſhment, thought I; ſo going into the kitchen to order ſomething, I met Mrs. Tiffany on the ſtairs. Woman, ſaid I, what wages does your lady owe you?

Six months, Sir; but I hope my lady will not part with me in this ſtrange place.

You had no buſineſs to adviſe her to come to this ſtrange place—there is your money, and three guineas to pay your expenſes to town, your lady never deſires to ſee you again.—Now by the aſtoniſhment of her countenance, and a ſort of leer that ſhe gave as ſhe tripped down ſtairs, I gueſſed I had paid her more than was her due.

HONESTY.

This woman has certainly got more than ſhe had a right to, ſaid I, ſtanding with my right hand on the top of the lower baluſtrade, and holding my purſe, which I had not yet tied up, in my left—The world talks much about honeſty, but I cannot comprehend where it is to be found.—The trader will ſtand behind his counter, and aſk you three ſhillings per yard for cloth more than it is worth, and if you are inexperienced, as it frequently happens in ſuch caſes, you pay him without heſitation—he knows he has impoſed upon you, yet he will

lay his hand upon his heart, and declare he is an honeſt man.—The Courtier—Oh! quoth reflection, pray don't mention a courtier and honeſty in the ſame breath.—The women—how can you talk of their honeſty, when you have ſo flagrant a proof to the contrary before you.—The Clergy—worſe and worſe; does not the beneficed clergyman, quietly pocket his hundreds, or thouſands, while the poor curate is ſtarving on thirty pounds per annum, and will not the rector preach you an eloquent ſermon on charity, and the curate ſpend his breath in recommending abſtinence.—Is this honeſty?

It may be called ſo, ſaid I.

The lawyer and phyſician—Oh, there is no honeſty there, I aſſure you; the one ſteals your fortune, and the other your life—but this is all in the way of buſineſs.

Then, pray where may we find this ſaid honeſty?

It was a ſort of queſtion I knew not how to anſwer—at that inſtant faithful Cæſar came and licked my hand.—You are right, ſaid I, patting his head. If any thing like honeſty or fidelity is to be found in the world, it is in your ſpecies.

Shall we go, Sir, ſaid Meliſſa, as ſhe came down ſtairs.

With all my heart, ſaid I, putting up my purſe, and offering her my hand.—The chaiſe was at the door, and I was actually ſtepping into it, without once recollecting that I had not ſpent a ſingle halfpenny for the good of the houſe.

THE RECITAL.

IT is all like a dream, ſaid Meliſſa, as the chaiſe drove off; a ſort of confuſed, diſagreeable dream, from which I ſhall be glad to awake—but pray, Sir, if it be not troubleſome, will you tell me the meaning of ſome words which you dropped concerning Cogdie? what woman has he ruined, and whom has he defrauded?

I will tell you, Madam, ſaid I—ſhe was all attention.

Five years ſince, a friend of mine died, and left a lovely orphan daughter to my care.—Olivia was young and inexperienced in the ways of the world. —I was gay and fond of company—the houſe of a young gentleman of fortune is not a fit ſanctuary for innocence and beauty. I loved Olivia like a ſiſter—I would have revenged an inſult offered her at the expenſe of my life, but ſhe required the tender ſolicitude of a mother, the ſedate mature advice of a father.—Her heart was the ſeat of ſenſibility, ſhe was formed for domeſtic love and felicity—having no paternal ties, no filial affection to warm her gentle breaſt—there was an aching void in her heart, which only love could fill.—Cogdie viſited at my houſe—he was much older than Olivia, ſhe was only ſixteen.—He was attentive to her childiſh pleaſures; her favourite dog was careſſed—he would feed her goldfinch, talk to her parrot, and bring her noſegays.—I was not of a ſuſpicious temper,

but placed an implicit confidence in Cogdie, who, by a thouſand arts, had ingratiated himſelf into my favour. It was not long before I obſerved Olivia grew pale and thin; ſhe had loſt her chearfulneſs, and I frequently found her in tears. Imagining ſhe might be ſolitary for want of a female companion, I propoſed her going into the country to an old lady, a friend of mine, who had a daughter but three years older than herſelf—ſhe conſented, and two days after was appointed for her departure. When the appointed morning came, ſhe was not to be found. I ſent to all her acquaintance in vain.—I cannot deſcribe my diſtreſs—I told my affliction to Cogdie; he conſoled me, and flattered me with hopes I might yet find her—I was happy to think I had ſuch a friend. Three weeks paſſed on, and I never heard of my Olivia.—Cogdie had frequently mentioned his being ſometimes employed by a capital merchant at Hamburgh, with whom I was acquainted when abroad—He came to me one morning, and ſhewed a letter, in which he was deſired to ſend the merchant a ring, the moſt valuable that could be procured.—I wonder, ſaid Cogdie, why he has not ſent me the money to purchaſe this ring; he knows my circumſtances are not the moſt affluent. He ſeemed diſtreſſed at not being able to get ſo valuable a ring on credit.—I ſent him to my jeweller; the ring was ordered, and it came to near eight hundred and fifty pounds—he took it away in haſte one morning, as he ſaid, to ſend it to Hamburgh; and I never ſaw him again, till a few days

ſince, when I was informed he was one of the moſt noted gamblers about town. I had given up all thoughts of ever finding Olivia, when going out one evening——

THE TRAVELLER.

THE roads are very heavy indeed, ſaid I, breaking the thread of my ſtory, and fixing my eyes on an old man, who was travelling through the dirt—There had juſt fallen a heavy ſhower of rain, and the ſun was now ſhining with ſcorching rays upon his head; he was dreſſed in a gray coat, and a bundle hung to the end of a ſtick that was acroſs his ſhoulder.—My heart is always intereſted by the preſent object.—This man, ſaid I, is no more able to walk than I am; and four horſes can certainly drag three people—I bade the poſtilion ſtop.—And what are you about to do? ſaid Prudence—Offer that poor man a ſeat in the chaiſe, ſaid Benevolence—ah! but you know nothing of him; he may be a thief, cried Suſpicion—or a very poor mechanic, and by no means fit to ride in a chaiſe with a gentleman, urged Pride—but he is a fellow-creature, and ſeems very weary, ſaid Humanity.—I ſtaid not another moment for conſideration.

And have you never heard of Olivia ſince? ſaid Meliſſa, when we were ſettled in our ſeats.—I know not how it was, but I could not proceed with my ſtory—there was ſomething in the appearance

of the old man, that awakened my curioſity—he was a figure not ſtriking; but examine it minutely, and you would find it intereſting. A few gray hairs were ſcattered over his forehead; his face ſeemed to have ſome traces of ſorrow and diſappointment; his features were grave, but withal tempered with ſuch meek reſignation and compoſure, that I contemplated them till I had forgot Olivia, Meliſſa, and almoſt myſelf.

THE CONJECTURE.

THERE is ſuch a natural curioſity implanted in the mind of man, that we cannot be half an hour in company with a ſtranger, before in our own imagination we form many conjectures concerning his ſituation in life—what ſort of a diſpoſition he has—whether he is married or ſingle—and fifty ſuch particulars, which are of no real conſequence to us.—I had not been ſeated with this old man above ten minutes, when I had ſettled in my own mind that he was a parſon, that he had loſt his wife, and that he was going to town in order to look out for ſome employment to ſettle his children in.—Thou haſt loſt thy partner, thought I, looking at him with compaſſion, ſhe who has heightened the pleaſure of thy youth, ſhared with thee the ſweets and bitters of life, and was thy companion in old age.—The bower that ſhe planted ſo many years ſince; the woodbines that ſhe trimmed and guided with

her hands, now ſhoot wild and neglected, and that bower which to thee was once a paradiſe, is now deſolate and gloomy, deprived of her preſence.—What a ſaucy baggage is this Madam Fancy, ſaid I, recollecting myſelf; ſhe has given me a pain at my heart by telling me a tale which, perhaps, has no foundation.——

Do not complain of Fancy, ſaid my fellow-traveller, for how many a heavy hour ſhe often helps to diſſipate, when ſhe ſoars upon the pinions of hope, and builds fine airy fabrics, extricates us out of difficulties, and leads us to the ſummit of our wiſhes; and we are for the moment as happy as tho' in the real poſſeſſion of them; and what tho' ſhe ſometimes does forſake us, and all the proſpects vaniſh into air, yet ſoon ſhe returns again, and again is welcomed—we liſten to her ſiren tale with pleaſure, and ſo wear life away. How often in ancy have I ruſhed into battle, and with this arm ſent hundreds to eternity—how often has fancy led me to my ſovereign's feet, to receive the reward of my paſt ſervices.

You are a ſoldier, then, ſaid I,—every feature was animated with the remembrance of former campaigns, as he replied in the affirmative.

Then by my ſoul, ſaid I, Madam Fancy is an arrant cheat, for ſhe had repreſented you as a parſon.

THE SOLDIER.

I HAVE ſpent the beſt part of my life, ſaid the old man, in the ſervice of my country.—At fifty years of age I retired, with no other fortune than a lieutenant's half-pay—it was but ſcanty, it was but ſufficient for the wants of Narciſſa, my wife, and ſelf.—I would tell you that my child was lovely, Sir, but I am old, and a father; both thoſe particulars would lead you to doubt my veracity. Our manſion was ſmall, but it was the manſion of content. Laſt ſummer an old lady came to lodge in our neighbourhood; ſhe took great notice of Narciſſa during her reſidence in the country, and at her departure, requeſted me to let my child come the enſuing ſpring to paſs a few weeks in town; with reluctance I conſented, for I thought the fair bloſſom of innocence would be ſubject to contamination if I entruſted her in the metropolis without a proper protector.

You was right, ſaid I—at that inſtant recollecting poor Olivia, and fearing I might again loſe the thread of my ſtory, I inſtantly gratified Meliſſa's curioſity, by relating the remainder.

THE RECITAL CONTINUED.

GOING out one evening, I heard a voice which I thought I knew, imploring charity. I ſent my ſervant to bring her to me; ſhe came weeping and ſob-

bing aloud.—She juſt entered the door, and ſunk inſenſible at my feet.—It was poor Olivia—I raiſed her, I preſſed her in my arms, and by the tendereſt careſſes called her back to life. When ſhe found herſelf in my arms, ſhe could hardly truſt her ſenſes, but ſliding from my embrace upon her knees, took both my hands in hers, and cried will you forgive me.——I aſſured her ſhe was pardoned; ſoothed her, and begged to know why ſhe had left my protection—ſhe unfolded a tale of horror—Cogdie had ruined her. She found herſelf pregnant, and preſſed him to marry her; he ſaid I would not conſent to their union, and when out of tenderneſs I wiſhed to remove her into the country, ſhe thought it was only to take her from him.——Conſcious of her own unhappy ſituation, ſhe flew to her betrayer—he for a while behaved with a tolerable degree of tenderneſs; but he ſoon threw off the diſguiſe, and turned her out of doors, at the ſame time informing her that I had taken an oath never to ſee or aſſiſt her.

Heavens! what barbarity, exclaimed Meliſſa.—Meliſſa pitied Olivia, but ſhe felt for herſelf——it might have been her ſituation.—She deſired me to proceed.

I took the fair mourner, ſaid I, into the country, where, in about ſix weeks, ſhe was delivered of a boy.—I told her unfortunate tale to Mrs. Sidley and her daughter; they pitied her, they determined ſhe ſhould not be loſt. I viſited Olivia in her retreat; my viſits were long and frequent; when I was ab-

ſent from Sidley Cot, I was penſive and unhappy; my former pleaſures loſt the power of amuſing—in ſhort, I at laſt diſcovered that the lovely Emma Sidley had taken poſſeſſion of my heart; I ſought her hand—I gained it, and brought my charming prize triumphant up to town.

Olivia has ſpent theſe laſt five years in ſuperintending the care of her boy; ſhe paſſes for a widow, and her charms have gained her many admirers, but ſhe declines them all; and declares ſhe looks upon herſelf as the wife of Cogdie. Chance diſcovered to me his vile deſign on you. Pardon me, dear lady, if I thought the method I have made uſe of, the only one that I could impreſs your mind with terror, at the precipice you have eſcaped, and guard you in future againſt forming clandeſtine connections with our ſex.

THE OMISSION.

AND what have you done with the old lieutenant? ſaid my Emma, when I had given her an account of our journey.

I ſet him down ſomewhere in the Strand, ſaid I.

I hope you found ſome opportunity to increaſe his little ſtore, without hurting his feelings, ſaid ſhe.

I was aſhamed to own my omiſſion; and yet where is the ſhame? ſaid I, as I ſat with my hand upon my Emma's knee, reading the ſweet lines written by benevolence on her lovely countenance.—Where is the ſhame that I was guilty of an omiſſion

through forgetfulneſs? it was not a wilful ſin againſt charity—I will go ſeek him, ſaid I, and repair my fault.

You will firſt go to my father, I hope, ſaid Meliſſa.

I took my hat, and ſtood full two minutes undetermined which to do firſt—they were both actions of benevolence.

Had it been thy caſe, bright pattern of humanity, ſaid I, opening a volume of Sterne, that lay on the table before me, juſt at the corporal's relating the ſtory of Le Fevre to Captain Shandy——had it been thy caſe, thou wouldſt have given the preference to the old ſoldier; but I am a father, and will act as my feelings direct.

THE RECONCILIATION.

IT is of no purpoſe, ſaid I to the ſervant, to deny your maſter; I am ſure he is at home, and I will ſee him—pray tell him I have particular buſineſs with him.—I had left Meliſſa at my houſe—after waiting half an hour, I was admitted up ſtairs—Meliſſa's father was ſitting in a penſive poſture, his looks dejected, and his dreſs diſordered.—On the other ſide of the room ſat a woman, the picture of envy and ill-nature.

You will pardon me, Sir, for this intruſion—I came from——

My daughter, eagerly exclaimed the old gentleman—and where is ſhe, Sir?—will ſhe come home again? Oh, lead me to her, that I may lock her in my arms, and with tears of joy waſh away the remembrance of her error.

I ſuppoſe Miſs is married, cried Mrs. Sarah.—She did not make ſuch an excurſion, and with ſuch company, for nothing.

Really, Madam, ſaid I, ſhe is not married; ſhe has taken a little excurſion, it is true, but ſhe is now at my houſe, impatiently waiting for a ſummons to throw herſelf at her father's feet, and implore his forgiveneſs.——The old gentleman called for his hat.

Why ſurely you will not forgive her, brother? ſaid the churliſh aunt.

Not forgive her! exclaimed the father—I tell you, ſiſter, ſhe ſhall be forgiven, taken again to my boſom, again ſhare my confidence; nor be driven by my unkindneſs, and the cold contempt of her own ſex, to that vice which I know her ſoul would ſhrink from as from death.

Mrs. Sarah muttered ſomething about virtue and propriety, and left the room.

There were three reaſons why Mrs. Sarah was ſo inveterate againſt her niece; the firſt was, ſhe was old, very ſallow, rather inclined to be crooked, and had a voice ſomething reſembling the cawing of a rook; it was therefore a great mortification to have a niece ſo young and lovely.

In the ſecond place, ſhe had formed ſome deſign on Cogdie's heart herſelf—no woman can bear a rival in love or dreſs.

The third, and moſt potent reaſon was, ſhe had never been a parent, therefore could not tell the pangs, the yearnings, the fond ſolicitudes that by turns agitated the heart of Meliſſa's father.

Come, let us go, my friend, ſaid he, let us go and bring the dear fugitive home.

As we were going, I gave him an account of our expedition.

I cannot bear to ſee him, exclaimed Meliſſa, hiding her face as we entered—He would not ſuffer her to kneel, but embracing her cordially, cried, Come home, my child, come home, and let us forget all that is paſt, I never will reproach you.

He was right in making this promiſe, for nothing is ſo liable to drive a woman to a ſecond error, as her being ſubject to continual reproach for the firſt.

I wonder, thought I, as they departed, if there is a greater bleſſing on this ſide eternity, than the power of conferring benefits.—The man who has it in his power to make others happy, has a large ſhare of happineſs allotted to himſelf.—I would not part with my ring, ſaid I, for half the univerſe; without it, I had been unable to deliver this charming girl from the hands of her betrayer.

THE PRINTING OFFICE.

AND can that young creature be an author? ſaid I—ſhe was ſtanding at the door of the printing office, waiting for admiſſion.—I had rambled out that morning in ſearch of adventures—my ring was on, I entered the office with the young author.

I have brought you my manuſcript, Mr. C——ke, ſaid ſhe; the ſtory is founded on fact, and, I hope, will be ſo lucky as to pleaſe thoſe who ſhall hereafter peruſe it.

Is it original, Miſs?

Entirely ſo.

Lord bleſs me! that was quite unneceſſary.

Why, Sir, how could I think of offering to the public a ſtory which has appeared in print before?

Nothing more common, I aſſure you.

He was a thin, pale looking man, dreſſed in a ſhabby green coat—he never looked in her face the whole time he was ſpeaking; but ſtanding half ſideways towards her, fixed his eyes aſkance upon the ground.—I never like a man that is aſhamed to look me in the face, it argues a conſciouſneſs of not having always acted with integrity.

Nothing can be more common, Miſs, continued he, than for an author to get a quantity of old magazines, the older the better, and having picked and culled thoſe ſtories the moſt adapted for his purpoſe, he places them in a little regular order, writes a line here and there, and ſo offers them to the public as an entire new work.

See here, now, I have publiſhed this work on my own account; theſe few firſt pages are original, but I aſſure you the ſciſſars did the reſt. I have entitled it The Moraliſt, and ſell theſe two volumes at ſeven ſhillings and ſix-pence.

I ſhould rather call that compiling, ſaid the young author.

Why ſo it is, in fact—but I aſſure you there are few people who have genius ſufficient to write a book, or, even if they had, would take the trouble to do it.—A ſentimental novel will hardly pay you for time and paper.—A ſtory full of intrigue, wrote with levity, and tending to convey looſe ideas, would ſell very well.

It is a ſubject unfit for a female pen, ſaid the young lady.

Why you need not put your name to it.

It is a ſubject unfit for any pen, retorted ſhe, a deep vermilion dying her cheeks, and fire flaſhing from her eyes—ſhe ſtopped, and checked her riſing paſſion—I think, Sir, ſhe continued, with more compoſure, the perſon who would write a book that might tend to corrupt the morals of youth, and fill their docile minds with ideas pernicious and deſtructive to their happineſs, deſerves a greater puniſhment than the robber who ſteals your purſe, or the murderer that takes your life.

Mr. C—ke ſtared—it was a vacant ſtare——he wondered, no doubt, how an author could ſtudy any thing but her own emolument—I was pleaſed with her ſentiments—if your writings are equal to what

you have juſt uttered, ſaid I, they will be worth peruſing; but ſome can talk better than they write; perhaps it is her caſe. Her works never fell in my way, ſo I cannot judge.——

You mean to publiſh by ſubſcription, ſaid Mr. C—ke—She replied in the affirmative——

And how do you mean to get ſubſcribers?

—By ſhewing my propoſals, and ſimply requeſting them to encourage my undertaking.

Oh! God bleſs me, he replied, ſtill looking aſkance, for he never changed his poſition, or raiſed his eyes from the ground, except it was to look at his elbow, and contemplate his thread-bare ſleeve—It will never do to go that way to work—you muſt have a tale of diſtreſs to tell, or you will never procure one ſubſcriber—

I am not very much diſtreſſed, ſaid ſhe; and if I was, why ſhould I blazon it to the world?

It is no matter whether you are really diſtreſſed or not, ſaid C—ke; but you muſt tell a tale to excite pity, or you will never gain a ſingle ſhilling towards printing your books—I have ſold eight hundred copies of the Moraliſt by theſe means—nobody gives themſelves the trouble to enquire whether my ſtory be falſe or true; it excites pity for the moment——they ſend me a ſubſcription—my purpoſe is anſwered, and 'tis a queſtion whether they ever think of me or my ſtory again——

She ſeemed tired of the converſation—ſo laying down her manuſcript, and deſiring him to put it in hand immediately, ſhe bade him good morning—

What impoſitions there are in the world! ſaid I, as I went out of the office: This very account will make me always refuſe to ſubſcribe to a book that is recommended by a tale of diſtreſs.

THE FUNERAL.

Two coaches with white plumes; in the firſt was the coffin of an infant, at the door of an elegant houſe ſtood ſeveral domeſtics weeping —A young woman who had ſtood at a diſtance, watched the coaches till they were out of ſight, and then burſt into tears——

I removed my ring from my finger, and inquired the cauſe of her grief.

He is gone, Sir, ſaid ſhe, pointing to the road the coaches had taken; he is gone, and I ſhall never ſee him again; he was the ſweeteſt child—I once lived with him, I loved him with unſpeakable tenderneſs, liſtened with pleaſure to his prattle, and when he was ill, attended him with anxious, unremitting care; he was the delight of his parents, he was the joy of my heart.

You do wrong to lament, ſaid I; he is gone to a more happy place; he is taken away before he had offended his Maker, to ſhare in pleaſures unſpeakable and unceaſing; then why ſhould you make yourſelf wretched? It is like regretting that he was not ſuffered to remain in a world ſubject to all ſorts of diſappointments and misfortunes; he is now an angel in the manſions of the bleſſed; why ſhould you then mourn his abſence from you?

Have you children, Sir? ſaid ſhe, with unaffected ſimplicity—The queſtion ſtruck me forcibly. I thus aſked my own heart—had Harriet been taken from me; could I have reaſoned thus calmly; the very ſuppoſition gave me an unſpeakable pang; it told me that reaſon had little power over the heart torn by the loſs of what it prized more than life.—I turned to the young woman—ſhe was gone a few paces from me—ſhe ſighed, profoundly pronounced the name of Henry, wiped off her tears, raiſed her ſwollen eyes to Heaven, and cried—Thy will be done.

I was aſhamed of my former reaſoning; that one ſentence convinced me, that Chriſtianity was a better comforter in affliction than the moſt boaſted rules of philoſophy.

THE HAPPY PAIR.

IT was a neat little houſe, by the ſide of the fields—a pretty looking woman, dreſt by ſimplicity, Nature's handmaid, was laying the table cloth, and trimming up her little parlour; her looks were chearful and ſerene, and with a voice pleaſing, though wild and untutored, ſhe ſung the following little ſtanzas:

Here, beneath my humble cot,
Tranquil peace and pleaſure dwell;
If contented with our lot,
Smiling joy can grace a cell.

Nature's wants are all ſupply'd;
Food and raiment, houſe and fire:
Let others ſwell the courts of pride,
This is all that I require.

Juſt as ſhe had finiſhed, a genteel young man entered the gate; ſhe ran eagerly to meet him.—

My dear Charles, ſhe cried, you are late to-night.

It was near ten o'clock—I had taken the advantage of my ring, and followed them into the houſe.—

I am weary, Betſey, ſaid he, leaning his head upon her ſhoulder.

—I am ſorry for it, my love; but come, eat your ſupper, and you ſhall then repoſe on my boſom, and huſh all your cares to reſt——

Their frugal meal was ſallad and bread and butter.

If to be content is to be happy, my dear, ſaid ſhe, how ſuperlatively happy am I—I have no wiſh beyond what our little income will afford me; my home is to me a palace, thy love my eſtate. I envy not the rich dames who ſhine in coſtly array; I pleaſe my Charles in my plain, ſimple attire; I wiſh to pleaſe no other.—

Thou dear reward of all my toils! cried Charles, embracing her, how can I have a wiſh ungratified, while poſſeſſed of thee—I never deſired wealth, but for thy ſake, and thy chearful, contented diſpoſition makes even wealth unneceſſary.

It is by no means neceſſary to happineſs, ſaid I, as I left the houſe——Charles and Betſey ſeem perfectly happy and content with only a bare competence——I aſk but a competence, cries the luxurious or avarlcious wretch; the very exclamation convinces us, that a trifle is adequate to the wants of the humble, frugal mind, while thouſands cannot ſupply the inordinate deſires of the prodigal, or ſatisfy the graſping diſpoſition of the miſer.

THE DRUNKARD.

IT was a confuſed noiſe of ſinging, ſwearing, and a craſh of breaking glaſſes.—Perhaps, ſaid I, this is a private mad houſe; for ſurely I am not near Bedlam. The moon ſhone bright, I caſt my eyes up towards the houſe, and perceived the ſign of the Angel—Good Heavens! thought I, this is a public houſe; and how ridiculous to place an angel at the door of the habitation of drunkenneſs and debauchery.

Of all the crimes to which human nature is addicted, drunkenneſs is the moſt pernicious; it is the maſter key that leads to all other vice.—Behold that young man; he is an apprentice—in a fit of intoxication he commenced an acquaintance with a lewd woman; he has not money to anſwer her extravagancies—he robs his maſter—he is detected—his diſtracted parents pay the ſum he has taken—they exhort him with ſtreaming eyes, to avoid ſuch exceſſes in future——He leaves them with a promiſe

of amendment——Returning to his maſter's houſe, he again is entrapped in his darling vice, and again returns to his abandoned companion—behold him now juſt entering her manſion—he has taken a conſiderable ſum from his maſter's till—the officers of juſtice are cloſe behind—he intreats her to ſecrete him—ſhe refuſes—ſhe delivers him up; denies her acquaintance with him—he is dragged to priſon.—See him now, loaded with irons, in a diſmal dungeon; he has received the ſentence of death—His parents enter; they are ſpeechleſs with ſorrow—he remembers their former kindneſs—he ſees their preſent anguiſh; his folly, his guilt appear in their proper colours—he would comfort them, but is unable—the meſſenger of death calls—another moment, he aſks but one moment, and that is denied ——his mother——

But ſtop; the ſcene grows too deep; I muſt draw a veil before it.

THE BUCKS.

AND theſe men call themſelves rational beings—they had interrupted my meditations by breaking the lamps and beating the watchmen who had endeavoured to prevent them. Among them was a young man of quality—Oh, ſhame, ſaid I, that thoſe whoſe exalted ſtation makes their actions conſpicuous in the eyes of the world, ſhould ſet examples ſo very detrimental to ſociety.

D—n me, ſays he, let us go and get drunk, and then roar catches through the ſtreet, and diſturb the ſober, ſleeping drones, in ſpite of all the watchmen and conſtables in the kingdom—Come along, my boys; and if we do go to the round-houſe, let us go jovially.

How very humiliating it is to human nature to ſee mankind ſo far degrade themſelves, and commit ſuch follies as render them ſcarcely a degree ſuperior to the brute creation—nay, I do not know but the poor aſs, who carries the loaded panier, or the ox who drags the plough, are more uſeful to ſociety than ſuch a man: theſe poor animals render their owners all the ſervice in their power, in return for their food, while the buck ſpends his nights in riot and debauchery; his days in ſleep; and, in return for the vaſt bleſſings ſhowered around him, inſtead of making himſelf ſerviceable to the community of which he is a member, he breaks the laws, diſturbs the peace, ſquanders his ſubſtance on the infamous and profligate, and dies without having performed one action that might make his loſs regretted.

You thoughtleſs, diſſipated rakes, that haunt this town, behold this compariſon, and if you are men, bluſh at your own inferiority.

THE MIDNIGHT HOUR.

THE clock ſtruck twelve.——

This is the hour, ſaid I, when Morpheus, with his drowſing poppies, has ſealed the eyes of the innocent and happy—but Morpheus is a courtier; he

never viſits the couch of affliction, or liſtens to the requeſt of the unhappy.—Now the lover, true to the appointed hour, to elude the guardian's watchful eye, ſteals ſoftly to the window of his fair enſlaver, who anxiouſly had counted the lazy, lagging minutes, and liſtened to the paſſing breeze that moved the flowers or whiſpered through the wood; caught at each ſound, and thought it was her love. Now the fair mourner ſeeks her widowed bed, and hangs over her ſleeping infant, till buſy fancy recalls to her mind the father's features—the tear of regret which trickles from her eye, falls on the infant's cheek—He wakes, he ſmiles, and charms away her ſorrows.——So, from the lowering ſky, when the ſoft ſhower gently deſcends on the half blown roſe, its fragrance is increaſed, its leaves expanded, and all its beauties are revealed to view.

At this lonely hour the ruffian takes his knife, and ruſhes on the unguarded victim of his barbarity.

Thou fooliſh wretch, think not the ſable curtain of the night can hide thy actions from the eye of juſtice.

This is the hour when the guilty mortal, though in a lofty room, ſtretched on a bed of down, and covered by a gilded canopy, though, perhaps, on India's diſtant ſhore he perpetrated the horrid deed; imbrued his hands in innocent blood to graſp a glittering toy, ſtarts frantic from his pillow—he ſees the murdered Indian, his gaping wounds, his mangled carcaſe; he hears his wife and children calling a-

loud for vengeance on the murderer; the cold ſweat bedews his limbs, his joints tremble, his faculties are loſt, he groans, and in his thoughts, curſes the day when he was firſt taught the uſe of gold or the advantages of power.

This is the hour——

In which, cries reflection, your Emma is wondering why you tarry ſo long from her; and, anxious for your ſafety, paints to her ſickening imagination a thouſand dangers which exiſt not but in her ideas.

—I quickened my pace

—She met me at the door

—I caught her in my arms

A tear had fallen upon her cheek, another ſtood glittering in her eye—the firſt was a tear of ſuſpenſe, the laſt of joy. I kiſſed them both away, and was angry with myſelf for having given her gentle boſom a moment's pain.

THE LOUNGER.

HEIGHO! cried he, ſtretching and yawning; how ſhall I paſs this day?

It was nine o'clock; he was juſt up, and had repaired to the coffee-houſe for his breakfaſt. He took the news paper, read two or three advertiſements; but ſoon threw it aſide, and ſeemed wholly occupied in picking his nails and whiſtling. I will follow you through this day, ſaid I, and immediately put on my ring. He left the coffee-houſe, and ſauntered an hour in the Park, then ſtrolled from one ac-

quaintance's houſe to another, till he received an invitation to dinner—That univerſal topic, the weather, being diſcuſſed, and the play for the night mentioned, he had not another word to ſay, but ſat ſtupidly ſilent, unleſs, indeed, he ventured to ſay yes or no to any queſtion aſked by the lady of the houſe.

He once complained of the heavineſs of time—ſhe recommended drawing—that required too much ſtudy—reading—he could not bear a book, it ſtupified him—muſic—he ſhould never have patience to learn; he liked nothing but the flute, and that would throw him into a conſumption——.

I am ſurpriſed, ſaid the lady, you like none of theſe; give me leave to recommend you a few books that I am ſure will help to wear away the time——Bridon's Tour you will find inſtructive and amuſing—Goldſmith's Animated Nature is the ſame—Sterne is a pleaſing author; and there is a vaſt fund of amuſement in—

You have mentioned books enow already, ſaid he (interrupting her) to laſt me my life. I never read any thing except it be a ballad, or the laſt dying ſpeech of people that were hanged.

Very entertaining and inſtructive ſubjects, cried the lady.

He dined, and then ſauntered to a public houſe, drank a pint of rum and water, went to the play when it was half over, and came away again without underſtanding a ſingle ſentence he had heard—went again to the public houſe, ſquandered away two or three ſhillings more in drinking, only be-

cauſe he had nothing elſe to do, and went to bed as he aroſe, with a mind entirely vacant, unoccupied by thought or reflection—This is the life of a lounger, ſaid I—If the lives of mortals are recorded in the book of fate, what a blank will this man's life appear!—Yet I am certain he goes to bed every jot as weary as the poor labourer who toils for his daily bread—Is it the fault of education or diſpoſition? ſaid I.

Reaſon anſwered, it muſt be native indolence, or he would otherwiſe engage in ſome pleaſing ſtudy, that might at once employ and amuſe him—

It is a matter of doubt with me, whether ſuch a man deſerves moſt our pity or contempt.

A TALE OF SCANDAL.

AND ſo you are writing—and do you intend to publiſh your works?

Perhaps I may, ſaid I—

What is your ſubject, pray?

Rambles, excurſions, characters, and tales.

And do you think the world will attend to your rambles, excurſions, characters, and tales?

I will write ſentimental rambles, juvenile excurſions, original characters, and tales of ſcandal, and then my books will be univerſally read.

The laſt article may make them riſe into ſome repute, ſaid he.

Doſt thou know the origin of ſcandal? ſaid I.

No——

Then I will tell thee——

She is of ſpurious birth; begot of envy on that blear-eyed monſter, Miſtruſt; ſhe was nurſed by Self-love, and tutored by Hypocriſy—She is hideouſly deformed, has a thouſand ears, and liſts to every tale—Her eyes magnify the ſmalleſt objects into mountains; and as her tongue has not the power to vent her malicious tales ſo faſt as her vile heart conceives them, ſhe makes up the reſt in nods, winks, ſhrugs of the ſhoulders, lifting the eyes, and ſhaking the head—She in general wears a maſk, and dreſſes in a pleaſing garb, which makes her ſo well received in all companies.

Why this is a tale of ſcandal indeed, ſaid he.

And the only one I ſhall ever write, ſaid I—for if in this vaſt globe full of intereſting ſcenes to excite our wonder, and engage our attention, if, I ſay, in ſuch a place, a man cannot uſe his pen without ſtabbing the character of his neighbour, he muſt have had a very narrow education, be poſſeſſed of a bad heart, and bleſſed with little or no underſtanding.

THE VILLAGE WEDDING.

I NEVER ſee the ſimple inhabitants of a village engaged in a ſcene of mirth, but I long to mingle with them——I wiſh to ſee, feel, and taſte, every thing with the ſame ſenſations they do.

They were ſeated round a large table, under the ſhade of ſome ſpreading oaks—I will partake of their

diverſions, ſaid I, without diſturbing them; ſo I put on my ring, and mixed among the groupe.

A nut-brown maid, dreſſed in pure white, the emblem of her own innocence, preſided at the head of the board—I looked at her with ſcrutinizing eye, and perceived it was my pretty milk-maid—She had that day given her hand to Colin, and the chearful company had aſſembled to keep the wedding.

Their repaſt finiſhed, a lad with a pipe and tabor, and another with a fiddle, ſtruck up a lively air, when Colin and his Roſe led off the dance, with ſtep ſo light, a countenance ſo ſerene, and an air ſo blythe, that I wiſhed myſelf an humble villager, and my Emma a nut-brown maid.

And why cannot all the world live thus? What need of titles, equipage, ſtate, pomp, and nonſenſe? Nature never deſigned it ſo.

Nor did nature deſign us to wear cloaths—

The idea was ludicrous—it irritated my riſible muſcles—what aukward beings would theſe tight country damſels appear, if they were dancing about in a ſtate of nature! A petticoat is a pretty ornament, ſaid I—and ſo is an apron—The dancers had tucked their aprons up on one ſide—it gave them a look of eaſe and negligence.

It is ſtrange, ſaid I, that among all the caprices of faſhion, the apron has never been totally aboliſhed, but has continued to be worn by all ranks and degrees of women, from our grandmother Eve, down to theſe dancing damſels.

It had never ſtruck me before that the apron was an ornament of ſuch antiquity.

They danced till ſilver Cynthia lighted up the horizon, and then all with one conſent ſat down to ſupper.

That paſt, the jocund tale, the ſong, the laugh, went round, and all was gay feſtivity and mirth.

In the courſe of the evening, Colin had twined a branch of myrtle with woodbine, and placed it on his Roſe's boſom—He could not have judged better; the woodbine was an emblem of her ſweetneſs, the myrtle of her love and conſtancy.

Farewel, bleſt pair! may your portion of life be pure, and unmixed with gall; may your happineſs be as permanent as your innocence and truth are conſpicuous.

THE RESCUE.

I HAD been at the play.

A young creature, in the box adjoining that I ſat in, had attracted my notice the whole evening; her fixed attention during the performance, ſhewed ſhe was almoſt a ſtranger to thoſe kind of diverſions.

The various paſſions that agitated her features at the intereſting parts of the drama, ſeemed the workings of pure nature—I did not like her companions; they were by no means ſuitable guardians for her youth and charms.

The one was a young man of fortune, a profeſſed libertine.

The other an old, fat woman, whoſe looks and geſtures beſpoke her employment.

I thought I could read in the open countenance of the young lady, an unconſciouſneſs of guilt, and a full confidence in the company and protection of her companions—I was determined to be convinced whether my conjectures were well founded.

When they left the play-houſe, I put on my ring, and followed them; they were ſet down at the door of an elegant houſe; the rooms within were ſuperb, the furniture grand, and the ſervants numerous—— Supper was ſerved up—they urged the young lady to drink ſeveral glaſſes of wine—

She complied with reluctance.

I will go and order the coach, ſaid the old woman, and left the room.

The libertine took the opportunity, which was intentionally given, and had nearly executed his horrid purpoſe, when taking off my ring, and ſnatching up a knife that lay on the table—Villain, ſaid I, forbear your attempts, or this inſtant puts a period to your life—Heaven is too watchful over the virtuous, to ſuffer it to fall a prey to ſuch luſt and barbarity.

If I was clever at deſigning, I would give you a ſketch of this ſcene.

The libertine, at the ſound of my voice, relinquiſhed his prey, and fixing his eyes on me in ſilent

aſtoniſhment, while every feature expreſſed terror and diſmay.

Half ſtarting from his ſeat, he exclaimed, in a voice ſcarcely articulate,

Who are you?

The poor girl ſat leaning her head againſt the elbow of the ſopha, pale and ready to ſink—like a timid hart, who for a moment having outſtretched the ſpeed of the fleet hounds, trembling looks around, and ſtops and pants for breath—again her purſuers appear in ſight—again ſhe would fly, but fear deprives her of the power; tears of anguiſh chaſe each other down her cheeks, and ſhe ſits in an agony of deſpair, awaiting the approaching ruin which ſhe is unable to eſcape.

I took her by the hand, bid her fear nothing, and led her triumphant from the houſe of infamy.

THE ACTRESS.

I WILL take a peep behind the ſcenes, ſaid I, one evening, as I paſſed the Hay-market Theatre; ſo, putting on my ring, I entered.

You ſurpriſe me, Madam—not come into the houſe about his buſineſs the nights that you perform? (ſaid a man, addreſſing himſelf to Miſs——) pray, in what has he moleſted you?

He met me on the ſtairs, Sir, and it is very diſtreſſing to be joſtled by ſuch low creatures. I will have the houſe cleared of ſuch people.

It is a very extraordinary demand, Madam—he is full as neceſſary in his ſtation as you are in yours ——I fancy, the heroine of a comedy would make but a poor appearance with her hair uncurled and unpowdered; nor would you much admire an hero with a beard of ten or twelve days growth.

I don't underſtand this inſolence, replied ſhe; it is what I am not uſed to.

Pray, what is all this fuſs about? cried a lame gentleman—

Nothing in the world, Sir, but Miſs —— and the barber.

It is very ridiculous, ſaid I, talking of the circumſtance a few days after, that a woman, whoſe bread depends upon the ſmiles of the public, and who, every night that ſhe performs, exerts her talents to pleaſe taylors, hair-dreſſers, tinners, nay, even chimney-ſweepers, when they can raiſe a ſhilling to purchaſe a ſeat among the Gods. It is the height of folly for ſuch a woman to complain of her feelings being hurt by meeting a barber on her dreſſing-room ſtairs.

Call it by its right name, ſaid a perſon that ſtood by me, it is pride.

Pride was not made for man, nor woman neither, I'll be ſworn; it ſpoils the fineſt ſet of features in the world, and is more pernicious to a pretty face than paint to a lovely complexion;—it ſits but awkwardly on a dutcheſs—and the Queen never uſes it.

What Queen? ſaid he—

Why the Britiſh Queen, to be ſure, ſaid I—

But then you make no diſtinction, ſaid he, between the conſcious dignity of a queen, and the pert ſupercilious airs of a favourite actreſs: if the world were guided by the bright example ſet from the Britiſh throne, pride would be entirely aboliſhed.

That would be a heavenly thing, ſaid I; for the annihilation of pride is like the diſſolution of the body, it unfetters the ſoul, and leaves it free and unconfined to ſoar above the ſtars.

I have frequently been engaged in diſputes concerning women of this profeſſion—it puts me beyond all patience to hear people advance an opinion ſo very contracted and illiberal, as that of ſuppoſing no woman can be virtuous who is on the ſtage—I know many at this time who are ornaments not only to their profeſſion, but to the ſex in general: even the lady I have juſt mentioned, is generous, humane and prudent, pride is her only fault—Charming woman! I have often ſaid, when I was enchanted with her performance of ſome amiable character—conquer but that one foible, and our admiration will riſe into veneration.—I am confident a woman may, if ſhe is ſo inclined, be as virtuous as Lucrece behind the ſcenes of a theatre. Virtue begets reſpect wherever ſhe appears; on the contrary, a woman of looſe inclination, though ſhe is immured in a convent, will find opportunities of doing evil.—It is a great pity ſo many women belonging to the ſtage are thus inclined; but why

ſhould we, on account of thoſe that are bad, condemn a Siddons, Brunton, Kemble, or Pope?—Why ſhould a woman, if ſhe is a good wife, daughter, or mother, be leſs reſpected becauſe ſhe has genius to contribute to our amuſement, by bringing before our eyes heroines we have ſo often read of, and exhibiting characters we ſo greatly admire?—for my part, I never judge of a perſon from their profeſſion or ſituation in life; it is from their actions I form an idea of their diſpoſition; and as I think genius and merit deſerve as much eſteem when we meet with them in an humble manſion as when they inherit palaces, ſo are virtue and prudence as valuable an acquiſition in an actreſs, as in the daughter of a peer, and alike to be eſteemed and reſpected.

THE RENCOUNTER.

IT is aſtoniſhing to me, how people can complain for want of amuſement. I am never a moment without ſomething to amuſe, inſtruct, or intereſt me—I never walk abroad, but I am attentive to every little incident that happens: a ſolitary, ſlow pace, the folded arms, or down-caſt eye, will excite my compaſſion, and a joyous ſerene aſpect will exhilirate my ſpirits—even in a wilderneſs, where never human ſtep marked the green turf, or ſwept the dew drops from the waving graſs, even there I would find company, converſation, and amuſement.

To a thinking mind, the book of nature is ever open for our perusal; and a soul warmed by sensibility and gratitude, reads the divine pages with pleasure, and contemplates the great source of all with wonder, reverence, and love.

As I wandered along, encouraging these pleasing reflections, I saw an old man buying some stale bread and meat at the window of a mean eating-house; he stood with his back towards me; his coat was dirty and torn; his whole appearance was expressive of the most abject poverty.—Friend, said I, going up to him, perhaps this trifle may procure you a better meal, putting half a guinea into his hand.

It always gives my heart a pang, when I see age and distress combined—age, of itself, always brings anguish enough.—How very insupportable, then, must it be, when there are no comforts, no little indulgencies, to compensate for those days of unavoidable pain.

As I presented my little donation, I looked in the old man's face—I thought I had seen the features, but could not recollect where.

Humanity is not entirely banished from the world, said he, turning part from me to conceal his emotion.

I immediately knew his voice—it was the old lieutenant.—Good God! said I, stopping him as he was going from me, what has reduced you to this distressed situation?

Misfortune, ſaid he.

And did not you know where I lived?

I was aſhamed to beg, ſaid he—a ſudden glow paſſing over his languid features—and I thought, Sir, you would be aſhamed to own an acquaintance with poverty.

You ſhall go home with me, ſaid I, calling an hackney-coach—let thoſe take ſhame to themſelves who deny a part of their wealth to merit in diſtreſs. I am proud to acknowledge myſelf the friend of a man of worth, though he ſhould be in the loweſt ſituation. And why, ſaid I, as we drove towards home, why ſhould a man be aſhamed of his misfortunes? why ſhould poverty call a bluſh upon the cheek of merit; we did not mark out our own fortunes.

But then the world, the world, Sir, will always ſcoff and ſpurn the man humbled by the griping hand of penury: nor is there an object that in general meets with more contempt from the rich and powerful, than thoſe who have ſeen better days, but are reduced by unavoidable misfortunes to a dependence on their ſmiles.

Strange infatuation! to ſet themſelves, in the pride of their hearts, above their fellow creatures; and for what, truly? becauſe a little more yellow dirt has fallen to their ſhare. I believe there are but few who know the true value of riches, and fewer ſtill reflect that they are only ſtewards of the wealth which the bounty of their Creator has committed to their care; and at laſt, when we all come to give

an account of our ſtewardſhip, the man who from a truly compaſſionate nature has wiped the tear from the eyes of orphans, ſoftened the fetters of the captive, or cheared the widow, will receive a greater reward than the oſtentatious wretch, who, having ſpent his whole life in amaſſing treaſure, on his death-bed, when he can no longer enjoy it, leaves it for the endowment of an hoſpital. Such a man is not charitable from his feelings for others, but an inordinate deſire he has to have his own memory held in veneration.

THE REPROOF.

AND do you think there are ſuch characters in the world, ſaid the old lieutenant?

I fear there are too many, friend, ſaid I.

I know not how it was, ſaid he, but I never ſuſpected mankind of half the vices and follies I have found in this ſhort month that I have been in London; and even now I do not think their errors proceed half ſo much from the badneſs of their hearts as their heads. I own, continued he, it is our duty to render every ſervice in our power to our fellow creatures, but why ſhould one, becauſe he has a juſt ſenſe of his duty, and diſcharges it faithfully, deſpiſe another becauſe he has not the ſame feelings. I felt a conſciouſneſs of having, in commending benevolence, ſounded my own praiſe—it was my turn to be aſhamed.—I felt abaſhed, and ſhrunk,

as it were, into nothing.—Oh, man! what a poor weak creature thou art, when even in the moment of diſcharging thy duty, thy own heart, eaſily led aſtray, will vaunt and boaſt its own ſuperiority. —The moſt benevolent action in the world loſes its intrinſic merit, when the man who performs it ſays to himſelf, I am better than my neighbour; I am not hard hearted, nor proud, nor avaricious.

No, cries humility, but you are vain-glorious.

I was quite diſconcerted, and could not forgive myſelf.

THE MEETING.

I HAD ordered my ſervant to ſupply Mr. Nelſon (for that was the name of the old lieutenant) with every thing neceſſary for him to appear in at dinner, and then went to ſeek my Emma.—I found her in the garden—the young lady I had reſcued laſt night, was buſy in platting a little lock of hair, and placing it in a fanciful manner to the bottom of a picture which hung round her neck. When ſhe had finiſhed, ſhe glanced her eye towards us, and thinking ſhe was not obſerved, preſſed it ſeveral times to her lips. I thought I ſaw a tear in her eye, but the chaſte look, the religious fervour with which ſhe gazed upon the portrait, convinced me it was a tear whoſe ſource might be acknowledged without a bluſh.

She had dropped the picture, and, reſting one arm upon a pedeſtal, ſeemed attentively watching Harriet and Lucy, who had dreſſed a little favourite dog in their dolls cloaths, and was teaching it to dance a minuet.—The ſcene was pictureſque; and I know not how long I might have contemplated it with ſilent ſatisfaction, had I not obſerved Mr. Nelſon coming towards me with eager ſtep and anxious eye.

Tell me, who is that? ſaid he, pointing to the young lady—but that I think 'tis impoſſible, I ſhould ſay 'tis my Narciſſa.

At the ſound of his voice the young lady looked up, and advancing a few ſteps, ſtood in an attitude of wonder and aſtoniſhment, till he pronounced the name of Narciſſa; when ſpringing like lightning to him, ſhe threw her arms round his neck, and cried, Yes, yes, I am your child.

It would be doing injuſtice to the reſt of the ſcene, were I to attempt to deſcribe it—words could not ſpeak the feelings of their hearts—It was a meeting between a fond father and an affectionate child—and I leave it to ſuch to judge of their happineſs.

THE REQUEST.

WHEN we had dined, and the cloth was removed —Tell me, my dear Sir, ſaid Narciſſa, by what

lucky accident you came acquainted with this gentleman, and what brought you at this time to London?

How can you aſk me that, my child? replied the old man; did you think your mother and myſelf could ſit quietly down when you had been abſent from us near a month, and we had never had a ſingle line from you?

I wrote twice a week, ſaid Narciſſa, wiping her eyes—ſhe could not bear to hear her mother had been diſtreſſed.

The old man continued——

I was too much intereſted in the ſafety of my dear girl to be at eaſe under ſuch diſagreeable appearances; ſo leaving your mother what money I could ſpare, I ſat out to walk to London, but was prevented by this gentleman.—On my arrival in town I went to the place where the old lady reſided, and was told by her ſervant that you were gone out of town to paſs a few weeks—I walked to the place whither I was directed, but could find no ſuch perſon—My little ſtock was almoſt exhauſted—I went again to the lady's houſe, and was treated by her ſervant with inſolence.

Narciſſa laid her hand on his ſhoulder, and gave him a look that I am ſure would have healed every wound the ſervant's inſolence had given his heart, though they had been a thouſand.

Oh! filial love, fair daughter of gratitude, ſiſter to piety, thou firſt favourite of Heaven, to whom long life and proſperous days are promiſed, how

doth thy angel's face and ſoothing hand make the paternal evening of life clear and unclouded!—But I am wandering from my ſtory.

I was now, continued Mr. Nelſon, reduced to my laſt ſhilling, and being a week in arrears for my lodging, was forced to ſell my coat, and be content with an old ragged ſurtout—I wrote to the lady two days ſince, but received no anſwer, and was almoſt driven to deſpair—when chance again threw me in the way of this gentleman—But how am I to account for your being here, my child?—what was the cauſe of your neglect and ſilence?—I think, Narciſſa, if you had known my anxiety, you would have relieved it by either coming or writing to me.

NARCISSA.

THE perſon to whoſe care you entruſted me, ſaid Narciſſa, was a vile woman; and it is only by a miracle I can have eſcaped her ſnare—I never knew you was in town—I have been whirled about from one folly to another, and have been witneſs to ſuch ſcenes of ſhame as made me ſhudder; but I was told it was uſual for people of quality to lead a life of riot, which my vile preceptreſs termed pleaſure.—A young nobleman paid me particular attention, talked much of love and ſettlements, and grandeur, but never mentioned marriage—I was ever on my guard; nor, indeed, was my heart

prepoſſeſſed in his favour—His perſon was not unpleaſing, but his manner was diſguſting, his morals corrupt, and his converſation unchaſte——I had frequently entreated leave to return to the country; frequently wrote to you, my dear father, deſiring to be commanded home——But laſt night, laſt night——

She then proceeded to give him an account of what has been already related to the reader--When ſhe mentioned the villain's attempt upon her honor, her father looked down to the ſide where his ſword uſed to hang—then at his hand—then at his child —then at his hand again—

It is not ſo withered, ſaid he, but it might ſend a ſword to his heart—It is not ſo much unnerved, ſaid he, riſing, and placing himſelf in an attitude of defence, but it might make a villain tremble.

He is beneath your anger, ſaid Narciſſa, taking his hand and kiſſing it—this hand, ſaid ſhe, that ſo often has fought for the honor of your country, ſhall never be ſullied with the blood of a coward; for who but a coward would ruin a poor, defenceleſs woman.

WOMAN.

Who but a coward indeed, cried I, for who can look at a woman in all her native lovelineſs, helpleſs, unarmed, and devoid of the leaſt defence againſt the numerous dangers that await her; who that

ſees her ſweet looks, that ſeem to ſpeak in nature's pure language—behold I am at your mercy, you are my protector, I am weak and defenceleſs, it is you muſt guard me—who but a barbarian, after having ſeen woman in this light, would attempt to injure or inſult her? Yet do I bluſh while I confeſs it, inſtead of remembering our duty towards the lovely ſex, man, who was deſigned by Heaven as their friend, is become their ſeducer; and the fairer the flower, the more eager are they to blaſt it—like the ſcaley ſnake, who tries to draw to its devouring jaws the harmleſs bird that thoughtleſs hops from ſpray to ſpray; he twines about, ſhews all his gilded ſcales, baſks in the ſun, rears up his creſted head, and courts the little ſongſter to his ſnare—It ventures firſt to gaze at a diſtance on him, then, by degrees, draws nearer to admire, till, faſcinated by his ſubtile arts, it drops into his jaws, and meets deſtruction.

Oh! how my heart has often bled to ſee ſo many lovely women, who were intended by nature to be the pleaſing bond of ſociety, the ſource of virtuous pleaſures, reduced to the ſad alternative of periſhing for want, or living on the wages of proſtitution. —But oh! woman, when thou canſt ſo far forget what is due to thy own ſex, as to be acceſſary to the ruin of the innocent, my heart ſwells with indignation—thou art then like the fallen angel, who, when in heaven, was the firſt among the bright ethereal bodies, but falling, becomes the loweſt; and envious of thoſe joys which he can ne-

ver taſte, exerts his arts, his malice, and deceit, to draw down others to the ſame dark abyſs which he himſelf is plunged in.

THE EAST-INDIAN.

HE had frequently begged of me—and when I relieved him, returned a look of gratitude—I always feel myſelf intereſted for thoſe poor creatures who are brought from their native country, and expoſed to all the horrors of famine in a place with whoſe cuſtoms and language they are entirely unacquainted—I ſay, within myſelf, what a poor miſerable wretch ſhould I be, if I were left in their country, without money or friends—We can never feel, properly, the woes of another, unleſs we place ourſelves, for a few moments, in their ſituation.

This man was generally near my habitation, and I often felt ſomething like curioſity to know his hiſtory—He appeared to me ſuperior to the common rank of beggars—I will aſk him, ſaid I, one day; perhaps it may lie in my power to make his life a little more tolerable—I ſent for him to my ſtudy, and having proffered my ſervice, inquired into his former fortunes—Chriſtian, ſaid he, I am a man who hold your race in utter abhorrence—I have been injured, vilely injured, by them, in return for kindneſs and friendſhip—I have my hiſ-

tory by me, written in my own language; if you can tranſlate it, I will bring it you; and you will then ſee how little I ought to depend on the word or promiſe of a Chriſtian.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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